

A WOODMAN'S SONG.

I would not be a crowned King,
For all his gaudy gear;
I would not be that pampered thing,
His gew-gaw gold to wear;
But I would be where I can sing
Right merrily all the year.
Where forest trees,
All gay and green,
Full blithely do me cheer.

I would not be a gentleman,
For all his hawks and hounds,
For fear the hungry poor should ban
My halls and wide-spread grounds;
But I would be a merry man
Among the wild-wood sounds:
Where free birds sing
And echoes ring
While my axe from the oak rebounds.

I do not sigh for gold or feast,
I claim not toll or tithes;
But while to me these arms are leased,
And these old limbs are lithe,
Ere Death hath marked me for his own
And felled me with his scythe,
I'll roll my song,
The leaves among,
All in the forest blithe.

Montreal.

H. M.

THE
GOLD OF CHICKAREE.BY
SUSAN and ANNA WARNER.

AUTHORS OF

"WIDE, WIDE WORLD," and "DOLLARS AND
CENT," "WYCH HAZEL," etc.

CHAPTER XXXII.—(Continued.)

SUPPER.

"What sort of abysses! And in the mean-
time, take some ice—Mrs. Coles was correct in
one thing she said."

"Dane," Hazel said abstractedly, "do you
think you could be a success where I have
proved a failure?"

"Where have you proved a failure?"
Hazel neglected her ice and leaned back in
her chair.

"I used to think I could do things," she
said. "And I have spent the whole afternoon
and evening to no purpose."

"It is instructive to learn sometimes that one
cannot do things," said Dane. "I suppose he
had a little curiosity, but not much, for he
knew he should hear what there was to hear;
and he was thinking much more of Hazel than
of what she had or had not failed to do. So he
spoke in a rather careless amused tone."

"Very!" Hazel answered. "Dane, in buy-
ing up a man, is it more skillful to set a price—
or to let him name it himself?"

"If you want to buy me,—I should say let
me set my own price."

"Thank you. Even my extravagance does
not desire such waste. But I want to buy off
that nephew of Mrs. LaSalle's. And—being
worth nothing—how much is he worth? I be-
lieve I ought to have offered a definite sum,"
she went on, half to herself.

Dane roused up fully now, and demanded to
know what she was talking about?

"He is going to Lisbon," said Hazel, too en-
grossed to be very methodical in her details.
"And Josephine Charteris means to go with
him. I can do nothing at all with her—and I
must do something with him."

"Not with Stuart Nightingale—if that is
what you mean."

"I must."

"I can find a substitute for that 'must.'
What do you mean to do, Wych?"

"Put them both under bonds. But I have
tried, and failed."

"You have tried Josephine? Do you say
that she wants to go with him?"

"Says she will go. Will not even take di-
amonds instead—and they were her price," said
Wych Hazel with sorrowful disgust. "So then
I tried him."

"Tried him! Have you seen Nightingale?"
"O yes. Annabella let him get her a car-
riage and drive home with us. I would not,"
said Wych Hazel with energy. "Not if I had
waited there all night."

"Was he in the carriage with you?"

"Coming home,—yes. And after Annabella
was set down, I tried him with everything I
could think of,—or everything he could, rather."

"I am very curious to hear what arguments
you made use of." Dane bent a little to look
at the speaker, with a face half amused and
wholly intent. Wych Hazel laughed softly.

"I am not a very roundabout person," she
said. "And if he had either honour or con-
science or feeling, there would have been no
need for my speaking at all. And Josephine
had just assured me that last year he wanted my
fortune—so I asked him how much he would
like to have now. In effect."

"With the understanding that he might
have what he spoke for?"

"O yes. Of course," she added with a flash
and a glance, "he knew that I could only mean
within certain limits. I did not tell what they
were."

Rollo looked at her for a moment very stern-
ly; but then he broke into a laugh. "It is
like Wych Hazel!" he said.

"Was it so absurd?" said the girl, the crim-
son starting again. "But I do not see why.
I suppose that is like me too," she added with
a half laugh.

"I do not think you absurd," said Rollo,

laughing still. "Perhaps—just a trifle—un-
businesslike."

"But I thought it was good business to say
exactly what you mean?"

"If you were practised in rifle shooting, I
should tell you that you forgot to allow for the
wind."

"Well, as I am not?"—said Wych Hazel
looking up at him.

"For instance. You are practising at a
mark, perhaps eight hundred yards off; the
first time you aim for the bull's eye, and hit it.
Between the first shot and the second however,
a breeze has sprung up. That alters the case.
The second time you will not aim at the bull's
eye, but perhaps—according to the force of the
wind—a dozen feet to one side of it."

"Did that ever happen in your shooting?"

"Such a thing has happened in my shoot-
ing."

"And you hit it, that second time?"

"I hit it—yes."

Wych Hazel looked soberly into the fire.

"You will never make a sharp-shooter of me,
Olaf," she said. "I think nothing will ever
make me learn calculation."

"What did Nightingale answer you?"

"He said—or intimated—that I thought I
had my old power still," said Hazel slowly.

"He is one of the men that have their price.
But you forgot that his pride must have its
price too."

"Pride! Can he have any pride? It was
just because—because he used to like to do what
I said, that he would not now."

"I do not understand yet how he came to be
driving with you."

"Didn't I say that? Why," said Wych
Hazel running rapidly over details, "Annabella
did not have their own carriage, but a hack and
a tipsy driver,—for Josephine's sake, you
know. And when we left Josephine he set off
up north to see where the snow came from.
And we made him turn round, and then jumped
out when we got back to Fort Washington.
And there we ran against that man again."

"How came you in Fort Washington?" Rollo
asked, his eyes snapping in the midst of the
very grave earnestness with which he was lis-
tening.

"That is where Josephine has hid away."

"Nightingale drove in from Fort Washing-
ton with you?"

"Yes."

"Does nobody know about this business?"

Rollo asked after a slight pause. "Not Jose-
phine's mother?"

"Nobody. Annabella thought I might have
some influence—but if I could not keep her
from marrying Charteris in the first place—
What can be done?"

"I will try. But Wych, I am going to make
one regulation."

"Yes. Well?" said Wych Hazel, with a
certain sneer at the name of "regulations."

"Whenever you go out in a carriage, here or
in the country, I wish you always to be attended
by a trustworthy servant—either Lewis, or
Byrom, or Reo."

"But my dear friend, in this case I could not
have taken either. Don't you see?"

"I do not see anything," said Rollo lazily.

"Not even that I am your dear friend."

"I have known you fail on that point before,"
said Wych Hazel demurely. "But the thing
to see is that Mr. Rollo's regulations cannot al-
ways be carried out."

"I cannot think of a case where I should
allow the exception."

"I'll tell you as they come. Then will you
try what you can do with that wretch?" she
went on eagerly.

"I think we can manage him. But I shall
not see him myself, Wych; that would be to
start his pride again; and of all human passions
pride is the strongest that I know—unless pos-
sibly jealousy. I must have a medium, and I
think I know the right one. I propose to offer
him, not carte blanche, but, say, five thousand
a year for five years; on condition that during
that time he neither joins nor is joined by Jose-
phine, wherever he may be. He wants money
badly, as you say. I think he will accept my
offer."

"You had better say for life," said Wych
Hazel quickly.

"No," said Rollo smiling; "that would be
bad economy. Some day you will know what
economy is; in the meanwhile, believe me. He
is not worth more than twenty-five thousand
dollars; and she is not. And if she is obliged
to wait five years she will never go to him after
that. As to the rest,"—and Rollo bent his head
caressingly by the side of Wych Hazel's—
"where my regulations cannot be carried out,
Hazel,—do not go."

"But Olaf—"

"Well, Wych?" he said, looking at her with
the grey eyes full of love, and full of delight in
her, and full of admiration of her; not the less,
soft as they were, full also of that expression
which is called masterful when people do not
like it. Wych Hazel looked up and then down,
silently knotting her fingers in and out. Rollo
put his lips down to hers, but waited for what
she had to say. It did not come at once.

"I am trying to push myself out of sight,"
she said frankly with one of her sweet laughs.

"And I am a hard one to push, sometimes.
But for my work—suppose I have something to
do which cannot be done so?"

"Don't do it."

"Really? Suppose it ought to be done?"

"It is quite plain that in such a case, it
ought not to be done by you."

"You leave me no more room for discretion,
than Mr. Rollo did in the old time," said Wych
Hazel soberly. "Well—I hope you will suc-
ceed with that man," she went on in her former
tone; "but he was not in a pretty mood to-
day."

"We shall succeed with him. And when
you get into any perplexity, what hinders Mrs.
Rollo from applying to her husband? Or in
case of need, employing him?"

"I always did like to work out my own per-
plexities."

Rollo laughed at her a little, and let the sub-
ject drop.

But the business of Nightingale he took up in
earnest the next day. Stuart shewed some
fencing, which however was widely distant
from fight; and in the end gave in to Rollo's
proposal, with the exception that he contrived
to bargain for five thousand down in addition.
Rollo and Hazel were well content. Stuart re-
ceived the guarantee of thirty thousand dollars,
and Josephine Charteris was saved to her family
and to society. And nobody knew anything
about it.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

ABDICATION.

Chickaree again,—and clear cold weather, al-
though it was March. Spring declared herself
timidly on the sunny side of slopes, and by the
water courses; spoke softly in the scented wind,
hung out her colours where snow-drops and
violets grew; and shouted—Spring fashion—
from the feathered throats of blue birds and
robins; but otherwise, in byeways and corners,
the snow lay and the ice glistened. The world
of Chickaree outdoors looked cold enough.

Sunlight flooded the breakfast room,—and a
gay fire; and before the hearth the little lady
of the house stood crimson-robed and pink-
cheeked, and just now very contemplative.

She was slowly balancing a large bunch of keys
—large keys and small—upon her pretty fingers.
Such was the picture before the eyes of the new
head of the house when he came in to break-
fast. I think he liked it too well to be willing
to break the spell of silence which seemed to be
upon the dainty lady, for while his eyes took
keenest notice, he made no open demonstrations.

Hazel sorted her keys, choosing out one,
changing it for another, then swinging the
bunch by a third and putting the rest in a cer-
tain sequence. Then she turned suddenly
round, growing more pink-cheeked than before.

"I did not know you were here!"

"Pray what then?" said he smiling.

"Are you at leisure for breakfast?"

"I usually am, at this time in the morning.
And to-day is not an exception."

Hazel sounded her whistle.

"Will you be at leisure after breakfast, Mr.
Rollo?"

"Depends on what meaning you attach to
the words."

"As we are not in theological—neither scien-
tific—regions, you might answer closer than
that," said Hazel. "Well have you time for a
long excursion into parts unknown?"

"Where?"

"I thought," said the girl, swaying her keys
softly and looking down at them—"Would you
like—At least, shall I take you over the house
after breakfast?"

"You shall take me anywhere you please.
Why over the house? Does anything need re-
pair?"

"You have never seen it all,—you do not
know where you are, yet. Nor what you have
to work with."

"To work with?" Dane repeated looking at
her. "It strikes me the house is for you to
work with. I have six mills to run."

"Yes, but—" Hazel threw off her first
words with a laugh, and chose others. "Not
just as it used to be, you know," she said so-
lately. "And part of it has been shut up,—
and you have never seen the whole. And if I
am to be house steward—" Dineas came in
with the breakfast, and Wych Hazel turned off
to that. It pleased Dane to let her take her
own way to explain herself on this occasion;
he would not hurry her. So he talked of other
things until breakfast was over. He had seen
Heinert already, and the change in him was
wonderful. Feeling thoroughly at home in his
old chum's house, he was as happy as a child;
not cumbering himself with what he would do
when he got well, which now he securely ex-
pected to do. It might be some time first; for
the present Heinert was happy; and Hazel
would see him at luncheon. And, meantime,
she had quite forgotten his existence in more
pressing things.

"I want you to see all the house," she said,
handing her keys again; "because then you will
know—what you want done. And so shall I."

"I do not want anything done," said Rollo,
looking for the meaning of all this, which as yet
he did not see.

"Yes you do," said Hazel. "Or you will.
All sorts of things. So come."

But instead of that, he put his arm round her
and drew her to his side, looking into her
changing face.

"Who said you were to be a house steward?"

"Must a thing be said in order to be true?"

"No. But generally speaking, it had better
not be said unless it is true. Night?"

"I suppose I must be something!" said
Hazel, with that pretty half laugh which cov-
ered so many thoughts.

"Yes," said he laughing and stooping to kiss
her. "Do you want me to tell you what?"

"Keep strictly to fact and not fancy—"

"Strictly fact." And folding her close, and
watching her face, sometimes touching it, he
went on,—"Something, of which it is said that
'her price is far above rubies.' The heart of her
husband doth safely trust in her, so that he
shall have no need of spoil. She will do him
good and not evil all the days of her life." She
will not exactly 'seek wool and flax'—or if,
it is Berlin wool, I believe; but it is certainly
true that 'she considereth a field, and buyeth
it.' And 'she stretcheth out her hands to the
poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the
needy. She maketh herself coverings of tape-
stry; her clothing is silk and purple.' I do not
think she 'makes fine linen'; nevertheless I
hope it will be true that she 'looketh well to the
ways of her household, and eateth not the bread
of idleness.' And if all her household are not
'clothed in scarlet,' she is very fond of wearing
it herself."

Wych Hazel listened with eyes looking down,
and lips that parted yet did not speak. But
now they curled unmistakably.

"Ha, ha!" she laughed. "What a mixed
piece of fact that is! Past, present, and future,
in one grand conglomerate. Do you suppose I
shall ever again have a chance to dabble in
land? And I thought you had ruled out the
'silk and purple'?"

"Did you? I suppose in Old Testament lan-
guage the silk and purple means that she was
suitably dressed."

"Scarlet ditto. But I do not know what
'spoil' can mean. If it said 'supervision,' I
could understand that."

"Spoil means profits and honours."

"That makes no sense of the rest of the
verse."

"Excellent sense. The heart of her husband
hath such trust in her, that he can afford to dis-
pense with what makes other men rich."

"O—is that the way you put it. Romantic,
but not practical," said Hazel, arching her
brows. "It might be so, but he would not find
it out. Now come and see the house."

"I will go and see the house," said Rollo,
speaking with a cool business tone now. "In
fact I suppose I should like to go anywhere
where you would go before and open the doors.
But what is your thought, Wych?"

"Only a small ceremony of investiture. I
want to take you over my haunts,—and leave
you in possession—of them, and any small facts
you may find there."

But taking one of her hands and holding it,
Rollo neither moved towards the door himself
nor let her.

"What is going to become of you," said he,
"after you have left me in possession of your
haunts?"

"I shall linger round to do all the mischief
I can,—after the fashion of abdicators."

"In that case, what is going to become of
me?" said he, not changing his position.

"I have no idea! I feel fearfully like my-
self since I came home."

"Do you! And what do you expect me to
do with your 'small facts'? Are they kittens?"

"No. Store them up for reference when I
am hard to understand."

"I do not want any reference on that chapter.
What are your small facts?"

"Little hints of how I have lived,—and with
what atmosphere and influences. Specimens of
the soil wherein Wych Hazel grew to be 'all
hat and bushes.'"

"And when did she abdicate?" said Rollo,
bringing both arms round her now.

"O—the precise day does not matter," said
the girl, as a very 'precise' day last winter
came full into view. "Dates are useless things."

"Tell me!" said he softly. "When did you
abdicate?"

"You mean—" she said, hesitating, with
her eyes on the ground.

"What you mean?"

"But Olaf—" Hazel left her protestation un-
finished. "I suppose, really, it was a year
ago," she said, not looking at him. "Only
that week before Christmas I was worried—and
of course I was full of freaks. And so—I felt as
if I was doing every thing for the 'last time.'"
Hazel hung her head, leaving the "freaks" to
their fate.

"How 'for the last time'?" said Rollo, with
provoking apparent obtuseness.

"Ah!" Hazel exclaimed,—then again sub-
mitting to circumstances,—"My will had been
the law of the house—and the people—and of
myself.—Do you understand, sir?"

"Where were your guardians?" said Rollo
with cold self-command.

"In my way just often enough to give zest to
all other times and places."

"And what is your opinion of the one guar-
dian you have left? Just as a curiosity, I should
like to hear it."

"He gave so fine a comparative description
of himself beforehand," said Hazel with a laugh
in her voice. "It would be quite presuming to
suppose he does not mean to act up to it."

Dane was silent, perhaps considering how he
should answer her; for loosening one hand, he
stood pushing back the thick curls from her
face, looking down at it thoughtfully. Then in
the same tone he had used before, he asked, "if
she had not learned love's liberty yet?"

"In what sense?" she said, after a moment's
hesitation.

"In the sense of being rather more a free and
independent sovereign than at any previous
time of your life."

Hazel shook her head. "If you make me go
into that," she said, "I shall surely say some-